

Message Text

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SUBJ: NEGOTIATIONS TO END HUNGER STRIKE BREAK DOWN--
REMOVE STRIKERS FROM THREE LOCATIONS IN LA PAZ

REF: LA PAZ 0415

1. SUMMARY: NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HUNGER STRKERS AND GOB
BROKE DOWN AGAIN EVENING OF JAN 16 OVER POLITICAL AMNESTY
ISSUE. AFTER GIVING STRKERS AN ULTIMATUM TO END HUNGER
STRIKE, GOB POLICE FORCES DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS JAN 17
INVADED THREE STRIKE LOCATIONS IN LA PAZ AND REMOVED STRIKERS.
SOME WERE TAKEN TO HOSPITAL AND SOME OTHERS APPARENTLY ARE
DETAINED BY POLICE. THE HUNGER STRIKE CONTINUES AT SEVERAL
LOCATIONS, INCLUDING THE LA PAZ ARCHBISHOP'S OFFICE AND
A CATHOLIC SCHOOL AS WELL AS IN OTHER CITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. WITH PRESIDENT OF ELECTORAL COURT, DR. JOSE MANTILLA,
ACTING AS INTERMEDIARY, NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HUNGER STRIKERS
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AND GOB RESUMED AFTERNOON OF JAN 16. DR. EDWIN TAPIA,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY, REPRESENTED GOB
AND FATHER JULIO TUMIRI AND FORMER PRESIDENT DR. LUIS
ADOLFO SILES SALINAS, CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY
ON HUMAN RIGHTS (PAHR), REPRESENTED THE STRIKERS. AT
DR. MANTILLA'S INVITATION REPRESENTATIVES OF THREE POLITICAL
PARTIES, THE PRA, THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE CHRISTIAN

DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WERE ALSO PRESNET.

3. ACCORDING TO FATHER TUMIRI, THE NEGOTIATORS REACHED AGREEMENT ON PROVISIONS TO REINSTATE ALL REPEAT ALL WORKERS FIRED FOR POLITICAL OR TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES WITHOUT LOSS OF SENIORITY; TO PROVIDE GUARANTEES TO ALL STRIKERS AGAINST ANY GOVERNMENT REPRISALS AND TO END THE HUNGER STRIKE. THEY WERE UNABLE TOAGREE, HOWEVER, ON THE AMNESTY CLAUSE. WHILE BOTH SIDES DID AGREE TO WORDING THAT ALL BOLIVIANS IN EXILE AND THOSE SUBJECT TO "RESIDENCIAMIENTO" (LIMITATIONS ON MOVEMENT OR ACTIVITY) WOULD BE AMNESTIED, THE GOB INSISTED THAT THE AMNESTY PROVISION ALSO CONTAIN THE PHRAS "ALL THE FOREGOING IS SUBJECT TO THE CURRENT LAWS OF THE COUNTRY". THE PAHR NEGOTIATORS, CONCERNED THAT THIS PHRASE WOULD ALLOW THE GOB TO USE THE SECURITY LAWS TO PROHIBIT THE RETURN OF MANY POLITICAL EXILES, REJECTED THIS AND PROPOSED INSTEAD THAT THE AMNESTY CLAUSE STATE THAT THOSE BOLIVIANS IN EXILE WHO HAVE COMMITTED COMMON CRIMES WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO THE JUDICIAL PROCESS ON THEIR RETURN. PRESUMABLY EXTREMISTS WHO HAVE USED VIOLENCE WOULD BE SUBJECT TO ARREST ON THEIR RETURN BUT POLITICIANS WHO HAVE NOT ENGAGED IN VIOLENCE WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO ANY RESTRICTIONS. WITH THIS DIFFERENCE UNRESOLVED NEGOTIATIONS ADJOURNED AT 2000 HOURS AND WERE TO RESUME AT 2300 HOURS. HOWEVER, BEFORE THIS COULD HAPPEN THE PAHR REPRESENTATIVES WERE INFORMED BY DR. MANTILLA THAT THE GOB HAD REJECTED THE PAHR PROPOSAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND HAD CALLED OFF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

4. AT SAME TIME GOB ISSUE COMMUNIQUE REAFFIRMING ITS WILLINGNESS TO STAND BY ITS LAST COUNTER PROPOSAL (WHICH HAD BEEN REJECTED BY THE STRIKERS) AND GIVING THE STRIKERS UNTIL MIDNIGHT SAME EVENING TO END THE STRIKE. THE COMMUNIQUE STATED THAT, "THOSE THAT CONTINUE IN THE STRIKE WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE PENALTIES PROVIDED BY CURRENT LAW".

5. THEN AT ABOUT 0300 HOURS JAN 17 POLICE INVADED THREE OF THE MANY STRIKE LOCATIONS IN LA PAZ--THE PREMISES OF THE DAILY NEWSPAPER "PRESENCIA", SAN ANDRES UNIVERSITY, AND THE LA PAZ PRESS UNION--AND REMOVED THE STRIKERS. THOSE TOO WEAK TO WALK OUT WERE REMOVED ON STRETCHERS AND TAKEN TO A CLINIC. THE REST ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO POLCIE DETENTION CENTERS. THREE PRIESTS AND ONE NUN WERE REPORTED AMONG THOSE DETAINED.

6. ACCORDING TO THE VICE-RECTOR OF SAN ANDRES UNIVERSITY IN LA PAZ, ONE OF THE STRIKE LOCATIONS INVADED BY THE POLICE ALL ACTIVITIES WERE SUSPENDED ON JAN 16 "UNTIL THE

PRESENT SITUATION OF DISQUIET, CASUED BY THE HUNGER STRIKE, IS OVER." AUTHORITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO IN SUCRE HAVE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THE UNIVERSITY IS BEING CLOSED JAN 17, A FEW DAYS SHORT OF THE NORMAL END OF THE SEMESTER (ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN NO SERIOUS DISRUPTIONS IN SUCRE).

7. SINCE THE POLICE ACTION ONLY AFFECTED THREE STRIKE LOCATIONS, NEITHER FATHER JAVIER TUMIRI NOR DR. SILES, BOTH OF WHOM ARE NOW RESIDING AT COLEGIO SAN CALIXTO IN LA PAZ, WERE AFFECTED BY THE POLICE ACTION. TUMIRI TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THE PAHR PLANS TO CONTINUE WITH THE HUNGER STRIKE AND WILL TAKE NO ADDITIONAL ACTIONS AGAINST THE GOB. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PAHR CANNOT CONTROL THE ACTIONS OF OTHER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PEOPLE.

8. CARDINAL MAURER, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY CRITICIZED THE STRIKE AS POLITICAL, HAS CHANGED HIS POSITION. THE CARDINAL JOINED 27 OTHER RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN SIGNING A STATEMENT JANUARY 15 PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS JANUARY 17, SUPPORTING THE MOTIVES OF THE STRIKERS AND CALLING FOR AN END TO THE STRIKE.

9. COMMENT: BASED ON OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH GOB SOURCES, THERE HAS BEEN PRESSURE FROM SOME CABINET MEMBERS, THE MILITARY AND SOME SECTORS, SUCH AS CAMPESINOS, TO MOVE AGAINST THE "ILLEGAL" HUNGER STRIKERS. THE POLCIE ACTION AGAINST SOME LOCATIONS REFLECTS THESE PRESSURES, AND THE GOB'S GROWING FRUSTRATION. BUT THE STRIKE CONTINUES, AND THE CHURCH HIERARCHY IS BEGINNING TO SIDE WITH THE STRIKERS IN THE WAKE OF POLICE INTRUSION INTO CHURCHES IN SANTA CRUZ AND APPARENTLY ORURO TO REMOVE STRIKERS. THE ISSUE IS THUS FAR FROM RESOLVED.

10. THE REAL ISSUE AT PLAY IN THE HUNGER STRIKE IS, UNFORTUNATELY, NOT AMNESTY, AND THE OTHER ISSUES THAT WERE UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE STRIKERS AND THE GOVERNMENT: THE ISSUE INCREASINGLY AT PLAY IS WHETHER ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE THIS YEAR. THE COMBINATION OF THE STRIKERS' INTRANSIGENCE ON FULL AMNESTY NOW ON THE ONE HAND AND THE GOVERNMENT'S NERVOUS INCOMPETENCE IN CONFRONTING A DETERMINED NONVIOLENT DEMONSTRATION ON THE OTHER HAND IS CLEARLY FAST ERODING PROSPECTS FOR ELECTIONS ALONG THREE PLANES. FIRST, THE STANDOFF IS STRENGTHENING THE HAND OF HARD LINERS IN THE GOVERNMENT WHO ARE PRESSING BANZER TO CALL OFF ELECTIONS IN 1978. SECOND, THE IMAGE OF INCIPIENT POLITICAL UNREST IS ERODING POPULAR SUPPORT--NEVER STRONG IN THE FIRST PLACE--FOR ELECTIONS. THIRD, THE BUNGLING OF THE BAZER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FORCES IN DEALING WITH THE HUNGERSTRIKERS MAY GIVE NEW LIFE TO
POTENTIAL PLOTTERS WITHIN MILITARY WHO WILL REACTIVATE WHENEVER
BANZER'S GAME PLAN FALTERS.
BOEKER

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